

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 16 are in the application, of which Claims 1, 5, 7, 11, and 15 are independent. Claim 16 has been amended herein.

In response to the restriction requirement set forth in the Office Action dated August 9, 2005, Applicants hereby provisionally elect to prosecute the Group I claims, namely Claims 1 to 4 and 15. The restriction requirement is, however, traversed.

The Office Action asserts that Groups I and IV are unrelated inventions. As set forth at MPEP § 808.01, unrelated inventions are those inventions which are “not connected in design, operation, or effect under the disclosure of the particular application under consideration.” MPEP § 808.01 states that this situation is “rarely presented”, and MPEP § 806.04 provides an example of two inventions which are unrelated: a locomotive bearing and a shoe.

Applicants submit that under the disclosure of the application, Groups I and IV are connected in design, operation, or effect. Both groups concern projecting exposure light onto a mask. The Group I method recites closely contacting the mask to the workpiece; however, this is not inconsistent with the Group IV method.

Additionally, traversal is on the ground that there would not be undue burden in examining the four groups of claims in a single application. In particular, MPEP § 808 makes clear that in order to require restriction between independent or distinct inventions, reasons for insisting upon a restriction requirement, such as undue burden, must also be shown. In the present instance, it is not believed that there would be an undue burden in examining the claims of Groups I to IV in a single application, since the four

groups of claims are not so different as would require a burden on the Examiner that is significantly beyond that of the normal burdens of examination.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the restriction requirement are respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Damond E. Vadnais", is written over a horizontal line.

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